REMARKS

Claims 1 to 28 are pending in the application.

The examiner's claim objections are traversed as set forth below.

I. TRAVERSE OF THE ANTICIPATION REJECTION

The examiner rejected claims 1-3, 7, 9, 12-13, 17-18, 23 and 27 under 35 USC 102(b) for being anticipated by Delavaux (USP 5,253,104). The examiner's rejection is traversed below.

The application includes a single independent claim 1. Independent claim 1 is directed to an amplifier comprising "at least two sections of amplifying optical fibre…". Moreover, claim 1 includes a holder for "holding the at least two sections of amplifying optical fibre substantially straight …". The Delavaux device does not include two sections of amplifying fibre wherein the two amplifying sections are held substantially straight in an optical support means. For at least this reason, claims 1-3, 7, 9, 12-13, 17-18, 23 and 27 are novel and patentable.

It is the examiners position that at least two sections of amplifying optical fibre correspond to features 34 and 36 of Delavaux Figure 1. However, Delavaux features 34 and 36 are standard amplifiers, each comprising a long length of coiled fiber. In addition to calling for two sections of amplifying optical fibre, claim 1 further includes an optical support means for holding at least two sections of amplifying optical fibres "substantially straight" during use. It is the examiners position that feature 12 of Delavaux is the recited optical support means. However, Delavaux feature 12 is a WDM that serves only to couple the signal lights from one fibre to another. That is to say, there is no amplification taking place in WDM 12, only coupling. Moreover, although the portions of the two fibres in WDM 12 may be substantially straight they are not amplifying parts as set forth in claim 1. Indeed, there is no teaching in Delavaux that WDM 12 is a fibre-based device. Therefore, the straight sections held in WDM 12 are not expressly disclosed as being fibers. For instance, WDM 12 could easily be a device based on rectangular slab waveguides.

In order for a reference to anticipate, every claim must be disclosed in a single reference. Delavaux does not anticipate claims 1-3, 7, 9, 12-13, 17-18, 23 and 27 because it does not disclose the claim 1 features discussed above.

II. TRAVERSE OF THE OBVIOUSNESS REJECTION

The examiner rejected claims 4, 8, 14, 16 and 19-22 for being obvious over Delavaux in view of Naganuma (USP 6,310,717).

The examiner's obviousness rejections rely upon Delavaux for disclosing all features of claim 1. As discussed above, Delavaux does not disclose or suggest every feature of claim 1. Therefore, there can be a no *prima facie* case of obviousness on claims 4, 8, 14, 16 and 19-22 by virtue of their dependency upon claim 1.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1-27 are pending in the application and are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons indicated above. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of all pending application claims it, therefore, courteously solicited.

McDonnell Boehnen Hulbert & Berghoff LLP

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By: /A. Blair Hughes/
A. Blair Hughes
Reg. No. 32,901